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22,000 Teachers To Get Pink Slips in California

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SACRAMENTO - State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell teamed up with the state teachers union, today, and a long list of others to announce the grim news that 22,000 California teachers have received notices of potential layoffs.

March 15 (today) is the annual legal deadline for school districts to send preliminary layoff notices, or pink slips, to teachers and other certificated school staff in California. More than 16,000 teachers lost their jobs last year, and roughly 10,000 classified school employees have met the same fate over the last couple of budget cycles.

"Today, nearly 22,000 educators, including librarians, counselors, and nurses have received pink slips," said David A. Sanchez, president of the California Teachers Association. "Class sizes will increase once again meaning less individual attention for each student.

"It means fewer classes like art, music, career technical education, and physical education. Lawmakers must stop the billions in cuts to our schools and students, and make the hard decisions to close corporate tax loopholes and find additional revenues. The future of our students and California hang in the balance," Sanchez said.

Here in the desert, local districts have been hit hard.

Desert Sands Unified School District is handing out 211 pink slips. Coachella Valley Unified will distribute 52, and Palm Springs Unified will hand out 51 pink slips to teachers plus 32 more, which they classify as "precautionary notices."

During the last two budget cycles, funding for public education (K-14) in California has been cut by \$18 billion.

The Governor has proposed another \$2.4 billion in cuts for this current fiscal year. To help schools through these difficult economic times, O'Connell is calling on the Governor and Legislature to support SCA 6, which would give voters the authority to pass a local parcel tax with 55 percent of the vote, which is the same threshold required to approve local school bonds. Currently parcel taxes must be approved by a minimum of two-thirds (66.6 percent) vote.



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